SANJEEV NEWAR

Religion of Humanity

ESSENCE OF VEDAS

FOUNDATION OF HINDUISM

The startling facts about "Vedas"

– a timeless heritage that humanity possesses

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PREFACE

Vedas are the most precious gift a creator has given to humans at the inception of human civilization. Since then, Vedas have inspired people all over the globe with their divine spiritual knowledge. Even today, this revealed knowledge leads and inspires humans to rise above temporary and mundane worldly matters and strive for eternal bliss - the Moksha (Salvation). Not only spiritual, but Vedas have been the source of all scientific, artistic, and linguistic discoveries. Vedas have been in the foundation of the greatest texts ever written to guide human beings to live purposeful, righteous, progressive and blissful life.

Not only spiritual leaders from Hinduism but clerics from all other faiths have paid their tribute to these greatest treasures humanity possesses. Some of the world leading scientists and historians have claimed to have found their inspiration in Vedas.

But despite being the backbone of human civilization, the mad race of so-called modern religions (cults) to establish their religious supremacy have drifted humanity far away from the original teachings of Vedas. Globally, this has resulted in the decline of the physical, mental and spiritual health of individuals, discrimination and everyday crimes in the society, endless wars between the nations and destruction of mother earth.

Particularly in India, from time to time, Vedas have been misinterpreted by self-proclaimed foreign Vedic scholars to subjugate Indians, divide India and defame Hinduism. Drifting away from Vedic teachings gave us more than thousands years of dark Indian history.

This book is reintroducing original teaching of Vedas to man-

kind. This book, the second of "Religion of Humanity" series, gives a glimpse of the essence of Vedas. The facts covered in this book about Vedas are the actual reasons "Why I love Vedas."

For further study of Vedic teachings, Agniveer has already produced detailed literature on some of the core facts about the Vedas mentioned in this book, and will continue producing detailed literature on remaining facts.

This book is my attempt to bring mankind back in the lap of mother Vedas and inspire humanity to explore the scientific and spiritual richness of Vedas for unity, wisdom, bliss and prosperity.

Sanjeev Newar
February 2016, New Delhi, India

"Follow Dharma based on principles, reason and truth. Always keep principles above personalities."

-Agniveer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface I
Meaning Of Vedas 1
What Are Vedas 2
Origin Of Vedas 4
Eternity Of Vedas 6
Divinity Of Vedas 7
Preservation Of Vedas 9
Knowledge In Vedas 11
Science In Vedas 13
Understanding Vedas 14
Knowledge Enhancement In Vedas 16
Truth + Logic + Faith = Vedas 17
Vedic Literatures 19
Concept Of God In Vedas 21
Purpose Worship In Vedas 24
Universal Brotherhood In Vedas 26
Respect For All Life-Forms In Vedas 27
Protection Of Nature In Vedas 29
Vedas For All 30
Equality In Vedas 31
Importance Of Women In Vedas 33
Women Rights In Vedas 35
Tolerance In Vedas 37
Religious Freedom In Vedas 41
Spirit Of Nationalism In Vedas 43
Importance Of Vedas 45
Conclusion 47
About Author 48
About Agniveer 51

ESSENCE OF VEDAS

MEANING OF VEDAS

Fact 1

Veda means "Knowledge"

The meaning of the word 'VEDA' is knowledge. It is derived from the root 'vid' which means 'to know.' Vedas are the eternal knowledge of the Omnipresent and Omniscient God, provided to humans at the beginning of human creation.

WHAT ARE VEDAS

Fact 2

Vedas are not just "books"

Vedas represent the eternal knowledge. But when we convert them into auditory senses, they represent certain sounds. When we convert them into visual sense, they represent certain Mantras that can be compiled into the form of books.

As an analogy, when a person has to be represented through hearing, his voice is his representation. And when a person has to be represented in a 2D image, his photograph is an accurate representation. Same is the case of Vedas.

Vedas are the eternal knowledge, and if we have to represent them as per the senses that humans can perceive, they turn into four Ved Samhitas.

Fact 3

Ved Samhitas are compilation of "Mantras"

Ved Samhitas are compilation of mantras divided into four parts:

- Rigveda
- Yajurveda
- Samaveda

- Atharvaveda

The Hymns or stanzas of Vedas are called "Mantras." The hymns of other Sanskrit texts are "Shlokas." The Mantras are unchangeable not only in content but even pronunciation. Thus, while a common person may speak Vedic Mantras without a specific focus on pronunciation, each Mantra has a specific method of pronunciation for each syllable in it. Certain lines and symbols over and under Vedic Mantras typically indicate the method of pronunciation.

ORIGIN OF VEDAS

Fact 4

Four Rishis were "chosen" for accepting the Vedas

Vedas were first revealed in hearts of four Rishis or seers during the inception of the civilization. These Rishis had the best traits as per previous Karma or actions. They were most eligible to understand and explain this knowledge to others.

Creation and destruction continue in beginning-less and unending cycles. Thus, whenever a new creation happens, the souls who are best equipped to accept and propagate this knowledge are chosen to be among the first humans in the civilization.

- Agni Rishi received Rigveda
- Vayu Rishi received Yajurveda
- Aditya Rishi received Samaveda
- Angira Rishi received Atharvaveda

Fact 5

Vedas were "revealed" in the hearts of Rishis

The Vedas were first revealed to the Rishis as complete package – meaning as well as mantras and their pronunciation. These appear different to us because of our limited knowledge. But in the state of perfection, language, knowledge and pronunciation no more

remain separate but become one and the same.

A simile would be when the child utters 'Maa' to call his mother. The language, meaning and pronunciation of 'Maa' altogether mean the same 'Mother' along with all the emotions it implies. Similarly, when the mind is completely devoid of all negative traits and fluctuations and focused on God, the language, pronunciation, and meaning of God's knowledge all are felt as one integrated package. The four Rishis, who were inspired with Vedas, had such exalted state.

From the knowledge and pronunciation, these Rishis developed the first rules of the language through which they trained others.

Thus, language also has its origin in the Vedas.

The knowledge of Vedas revealed from them in a similar manner the inspiration for doing noble things emerge in hearts of noble men. Then these four Rishis trained other people with Vedic knowledge and hence civilization began.

The scholars among these other people contemplated on particular mantras of Vedas and were called Rishis because they researched into meanings of these Mantras which were useful for entire humanity. Civilization and knowledge flourished henceforth.

ETERNITY OF VEDAS

Fact 6

Vedas are the "first source" of wisdom

Vedas are the first source of wisdom known to humankind. No one has been able to date them reasonably. All we know is that whatever period we look back in documented past, there is no evidence that Vedas did not exist. Vedas are the oldest knowledge known to humankind.

Also, the entity is identified by its traits only. Eternal entities have eternal traits. And non-eternal entities have non-eternal traits. Therefore, since God is eternal, his knowledge can't be non-eternal.

Moreover, Vedas contain absolute truth and universally correct principles. Therefore, in that sense also, Vedas are eternal because the truth is eternal and never changing.

Rigveda is the oldest text known to humanity.

DIVINITY OF VEDAS

Fact 7

Vedas are "divine" revelation of God

Any book that comes into existence after humanity has lived a certain period of time on this earth cannot claim to be the divine revelation of God. Because the language required creating that book has already been developed before the creation of the book. But the origin of language itself is found in Vedas. Therefore, only Vedas can be considered as a divine revelation of God.

Also, for God to be just and kind, God must give his knowledge to humanity at the beginning of the creation to start the civilization. If God reveals his knowledge at some point during the civilization, God cannot be just to the people who lived before the revelation of his knowledge. No other text except Vedas, pass this test of divinity.

Therefore, only Vedas are considered authentic revelations of Ishwar. Others are human created texts and do not come close to Vedas regarding their authenticity.

Veda is a permanent, eternal knowledge that got manifested in a same natural manner as creation happened.

Fact 8

Vedas contain "no history"

As Vedas were revealed during the inception of civilization, before

any human history was created, they do not refer to any human event.

Human actions, which create history, are subject to human will. And God has given us complete freedom to exercise our will. Vedas contain eternal knowledge and talk about fundamental laws and principles that remain unchanged. Hence, they do not deal with things that can change based on human will. Therefore, history has no place in Vedas.

PRESERVATION OF VEDAS

Fact 9

No textual "corruption" in Vedas

Not one syllable can be altered from Vedas. The way the oldest knowledge of humankind has been preserved is such that even an alteration of one syllable, leave mantra or chapter, can be tracked.

Vedas have been meticulously preserved in such a systematic manner that the original Vedas are still available to us in same pristine form. Not just words, but even pronunciation and intonations!

The God, who devised the universe to help us reach ultimate bliss and supports us in all ways possible, ensured that Vedas are never lost from humanity.

The mechanism to preserve the Vedas was:

Through memorizing ten different ways of reciting Vedic mantras in different permutations. They are called 'Paatha Vidhi.'

Thus, different words of the mantra would be spoken in different orders.

The different Paathas of Vedas were memorized by different humans.

They then taught these Paatha Vidhi to next generation.

Whenever a doubt would come, that would be sorted out by

checking out the different Paatha pronunciations. This way it was ensured that not even a syllable could be altered. Thus, even change of high pitch to low pitch would be caught.

Later, these Vedas were written down. But oral traditions continued and still remain existent in India. While Northern India was under a lot of turmoil in history due to invasions, South India was relatively peaceful. And hence, the tradition continued uninterrupted. No other book had such a rigorous way of protection. And hence, no other book in the world can claim such authenticity.

Even the skeptic Western Indologists, who explored Vedas to propagate Christianity, could not help admitting this to be a great wonder of human civilization. Max Muller was one such researcher who commented thus.

Quite a wonderful human feat given that Vedas has more than 20,000 verses! A reason to congratulate 'being human'!

Today, the four Vedas are available as print format.

KNOWLEDGE IN VEDAS

Fact 10

Vedas are truly "comprehensive"

Vedic mantras can have multiple meanings depending upon the context. This is the manner in which source of all forms of knowledge is embedded within the Vedas. The words in Vedas are to be interpreted as per fundamental roots of words and not later-dated common usages. For example "Gau" in Vedas refers to "moveable" among other meanings, and hence, cannot be interpreted to be "cow" in all mantras.

Vedas contain not just spiritual wisdom, but sufficient insights in practical life as well–science, technology, medicines, health, society, family, economics, mathematics, finance, research, education and so on. I am yet to find a subject not covered in Vedas.

Vedas contain all forms of fundamental knowledge - physics, chemistry, sociology, mathematics, theology, engineering, etc.

Vedas provide details on building ships and airplanes. They talk of basics of mathematics and decimal system. They refer to gravity and electricity.

- Rigveda focuses on knowledge of all material and spiritual objects.
- Yajurveda deals mainly with recommended actions for humans.

- Samaveda deals with devotion and contemplation.
- Atharvaveda contains applications deriving essence from all three Vedas and their themes. (knowledge, action, and contemplation)

SCIENCE IN VEDAS

Fact 11

Nothing in Vedas is "opposed to Science and Reason"

Vedas not only contain the highest form of spiritual and metaphysical knowledge but also knowledge on physical science.

Unlike many medieval texts, Earth is not flat in Vedas. Earth moves round the sun in Vedas. Moving a metal wire between magnetic poles generate electricity in Vedas. Gravitational and electrical forces follow the inverse square law in Vedas. Orbits of planets are elliptical in Vedas. Binary logic can lead to advanced automated calculation mechanisms as per Vedas.

Upavedas like Ayurveda and Dhanurveda deal with medical science and military science respectively.

I am yet to see a religious book apart from the Vedic university that is so scientific. All I know is that till recent, some religious cults punished belief in these scientific facts as blasphemy.

But Vedas openly encourage such blasphemy and going against the trend.

UNDERSTANDING VEDAS

Fact 12

Vedas are written in "Vedic Sanskrit"

Vedas are written in Vedic Sanskrit (not conventional Sanskrit) which is the mother of all languages of the world. To read Vedas, one needs to master the language of Vedas – Sanskrit.

Fact 13

Emphasis on "pronunciation" is important

Correct pronunciation while reciting Vedic mantras has helped preserve Vedas in exactly the same form as they first came.

The meaning of the Mantra changes as per change in pronunciation. This is like, what we do in real life also. The same words said in two different tones may mean completely opposite.

All Vedic Mantras have several meanings. Further, the depth of meaning for each Mantra is also virtually infinite. To a beginner, certain meaning of a Mantra would be more obvious. But if she or he focuses on pronunciation pattern as well, further depths and news insights are revealed.

Fact 14

"Mugging up" Mantras would not help

Simply mugging up mantras would be a waste of time. Vedas are a workbook. One needs to practice the meaning in Knowledge,

Action, and Contemplation. Further, each mantra has deeper and deeper layers of meanings. This exploration is a life-long but extremely enjoyable process.

One needs to submerge completely to get benefits and fun! - Like in learning any sports or skills. Shortcuts are a waste of time. Often many people mug up mantras, standard speeches, and dialogues and pose as experts. They may gain popularity, but they are wasting their time and making their future progress even more difficult due to layers of false ego that they have accumulated.

Fact 15

"Yogic approach" is MUST to understand Vedas

To understand Vedas, not only language is necessary, but one needs to master certain other subjects. But even more important is an analytical bent of mind and a Yogic approach.

What is meant by Yogic approach is mastery over senses and mind. Since the concepts of Vedas are very subtle, a disturbed mind or a mind indulged in petty issues and enjoyments of the world can make neither head nor tail out of it. This is same as we would say that it is useless for an uneducated drunkard to try to read Einstein's Theory of Relativity.

Thus, the simultaneous practice of mind discipline and an analytical attitude are necessary to start exploring the Vedas.

KNOWLEDGE ENHANCEMENT IN VEDAS

Fact 16

Vedas do not "spoon-feed"

Vedas do not get into those details which can be explored by humans themselves. Vedas provide a process of thinking and extol humans to explore further. Thus, Vedas encourage research and exploration. They provide the seeds and not the trees. They give hint and demand humans to discover the rest through efforts. They provide clues so that we could move ahead and explore more truths ourselves.

Vedas do not spoon-feed because ultimate bliss demands efforts. But they give sufficient directions to ensure one is not misled. And that applies to all fields – physical, social, mental sciences.

Thus, Vedas are the best brain tonic humans can have.

TRUTH + LOGIC + FAITH = VEDAS

Fact 17

"No superstitions" in Vedas

Vedas are the only texts which claim that truth and logic go hand in hand with faith. All others would like you to have faith without scrutiny.

Vedas are strongly against any form of superstition or fatalism and advocate potential for free-will and extracting results through efforts. Vedas encourage scientific thinking. They urge us to reject whatever is based merely on tall claims and does not stand the test of reason.

Fact 18

Vedas contain no "miracles or stories"

Vedas contain science, best practices, and spiritual knowledge. Hence, Vedas are devoid of stories, miracles, history or a founder we must blindly surrender to. A rare advantage for being the truly pre-historic texts!

Fact 19

No demand for "blind belief" in Vedas

Vedas do not demand belief in unseen and unverified. Vedas are based on the premise that all source of wisdom lies within each of us. Through practice and will-power, one can unravel that source of knowledge.

So, as per Vedas, instead of blind faith on anything, one should attempt to discover the wisdom within through efforts, contemplation, good deeds and knowledge-seeking.

VEDIC LITERATURES

Fact 20

Vedas are the foundation of "marvelous" texts

Vedas form foundations of marvelous texts like Bhagavad Gita, Yog Darshan, and Upanishads. Of all the books I have ever read, nothing matches these classics in inspiration, insights, purpose and value-enhancement.

There are two kinds of Vedic literature – Shruti and Smriti. Shruti refers only to Veda Samhitas. Veda Samhitas contain Jnana (Knowledge), Karma (Action) and Upasana (Contemplation). Only Ishopanishad, which is chapter 40 of Yajurveda, is part of Vedas and hence is Shruti.

No other text is Shruti. Everything else is Smriti. Smriti means all scriptures except Vedas. So other Upanishads, Ramayan, Mahabharat, Geeta, Brahmans, Manu Smriti, etc. all are Smritis.

Almost all Smriti texts had been subjected to adulteration. Therefore, if we don't understand something in other texts, or find disputes among other texts, we should refer to Veda Samhitas and consider that as final.

In short, all Smriti texts have to be interpreted in light of Vedas.

Fact 21
Vedic translations of "western scholars"

Vedas cannot be interpreted literally using modern language. The interpretation of mantras requires contemplation, deep introspection, purity of mind and a yogic lifestyle as essential ingredients. Without that, one can only be expected to misinterpret Vedas as exemplified by several meat-eating, alcohol consuming, lustful living, materialistic, egoist self-proclaimed Vedic scholars of modern times. More so, because one cannot cook up meanings of Vedic mantras as per later-period usages and conventions.

The Vedic translations of almost all western scholars like Max Muller, Wilson, Griffith, Jones, etc. are simply trash items. Any contradictions found in the translation of Vedas are based upon the translations done by western "scholars."

One should be wary of using this junk for discovering Vedas.

CONCEPT OF GOD IN VEDAS

Fact 22
"One and only one" God in Vedas

All Vedas unequivocally consider Ishwar to be one and one alone. No mantra in Vedas can be considered as even silent approval of polytheism. Vedas unequivocally declare that there is only one God – Ishwar and He is unparalleled.

Vedas call this Omnipotent God through various adjectives. People without an unbiased Yogic disposition took these names as that of different Gods. But several mantras of Vedas clarify this and state that "He is one and only one."

Fact 23
"33 Devatas" in Vedas

The exact term is 33 Koti Devata, which people translate into 33 crore Gods. Let us understand that Koti also means 'type.' And in Vedas, 33 Devatas are indeed referred but comprehensively summarized in Shatpath Brahman, which is a commentary on Vedas.

Devata does not mean Ishwar or Omnipotent God. It originates from root 'Divu' and refers to anything that benefits us. It has the same origin as that of word 'Daan' which means charity. There are several other meanings of 'Divu' like conquer, pursuit, brilliancy, praise, knowledge, motion, etc.

In the parlance of 33 Koti Devata, they refer to 33 non-living

objects which benefit us namely:

- Eight Vasus – Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Sky, Moon, Sun, Stars/ Planets
- Ten Life Forces
- Soul
- Twelve Aditya or months of year
- One Vidyut or Electromagnetic force that is of tremendous use to us
- One Yajna or constant noble, selfless deeds done by humans

Further, Vedas proclaim that Ishwar/God provides us with all Devatas.

Fact 24
Vedic God "does not live in the sky"

God of Vedas does not sit on a chair on top of the sky. Since the earth is round in Vedas, this concept of 4th or 7th sky or top of the sky is irrelevant as per Vedas.

Instead, God of Vedas refers to the source that empowers all living beings and ensures that they interact with the material world as per unchangeable laws.

God of Vedas does not twist its laws or show miracles or get angry or sleep or keep an army or court of angels and prophets or grant special favors to anyone.

God of Vedas is present everywhere, within and outside us,

unchangeable, undying, unborn, impersonal and a consistent law-keeper.

In fact, the Ishwar or Paramatma of Vedas is a completely different entity from the God in other later era religious books. The similar usage of words is a cause of confusion.

PURPOSE WORSHIP IN VEDAS

Fact 25

Vedas describe "no rituals or steps or images" for worship

Vedas provide the basic concepts that should logically form the foundation of any worship. Vedas condemn the practice of restricting God in the idol. That is neither true nor respectful to God.

Vedas instead explain a method of mind-control and skills enhancement to worship God. This leads to improved physical, mental and spiritual health and hence the devotee is able to put better efforts.

Vedas deals with Yogic method of worship and not a ritualistic method of worship.

Some Vedic prayers are:

- Lead us from the darkness of ignorance to the light of true knowledge.
- I vow to walk on the path of truth every single moment of my life.
- May our intellect follow your limitless intellect.
- Give me the knowledge and strength to do worthwhile actions for the betterment of entire humanity.

- Gayatri Mantra – I resolve to direct all my thoughts to the source of empowerment and enlightenment of all living beings to best of my capabilities.
- Shuddhi Mantras – I resolve to purify my mind of all forms of negative thinking, hatred, helplessness, lust, greed and strive to live a life that benefits everyone in society. I shall not discriminate on the basis of beliefs, wealth, power, education when serving the society. My life is dedicated to a selfless, honest service of the entire world with a pure heart. If I ever even thought of anything with ill intentions towards anyone in the world, I humbly apologize and resolve to never do so again.

UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD IN VEDAS

Fact 26

'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" in Vedas

While modern religions have divided mankind under different Gods, which has been the prime reason for never-ending conflicts and wars, Vedas unify the mankind under one and only one infinite God.

Vedas encourage humans to rise above petty discriminations and consider entire humanity as one family. No other text on earth has such an unequivocal stand on universal humanism as Vedas – Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – entire humanity is my own family.

If we live this concept of universal brotherhood from Vedas, the world would be free from all conflicts, crimes, and wars in no time.

RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE-FORMS IN VEDAS

Fact 27
"No animal sacrifice" in Vedas

Vedas respect all life-forms and are against any sort of killing for selfish desires. All those claims of Vedas containing beef-eating and animal sacrifices in Yajnas are blatant hoaxes propagated by semi-literate self-proclaimed scholars.

Vedas believe in non-violence and prohibit all forms of animal killing for the esoteric purpose. Vedas also prohibit the killing of animals for food and appeal for compassion for all living beings.

In Vedas, Yajna has three meanings:

- Respect for God and good people
- Good company and
- Charitable Acts that benefit all

Thus, in Vedas, Yajna has a very comprehensive meaning. The normal Yajna we associate with the word Yajna is called Agnihotra and is a routine to purify environment and minds of pollution. It has its own medical and spiritual benefits. But it has nothing to do with animal sacrifice.

Yajna dedicated to keeping the Earth the environment clean is called Gomedha Yajna. It has nothing to with cow sacrifice in

Yajna.

Yajna dedicated to the glory, wellbeing and prosperity of the Rashtra the nation or empire is known as the Ashwamedh Yajna. It has nothing to with horse sacrifice in Yajna.

The cremation of the body of a dead person in accordance with the principles laid down in the Vedas is called Naramedha Yajna. It has nothing to do with human sacrifice in Yajna.

No Yajna in Vedas has to be taken in this restrictive sense.

PROTECTION OF NATURE IN VEDAS

Fact 28

Vedas encourage "protecting the nature"

Along with other humans and living beings, Vedas urge us to live in harmony with nature. The concept of Vedas is to give as much back to the world as much you take it.

By our mere existence, we pollute the world. In the name of progress, we have ruined the environment. Hence, as per Vedas, it becomes our supreme duty to take proactive efforts to protect the environment. Vedas are the first and most vocal advocates of green technology and "Save Environment" mission.

VEDAS FOR ALL

Fact 29

Vedas are truly "universal"

Vedas are truly universal. Vedas do not belong to any particular caste, religion, community or country. Vedas are relevant to all geographies of the world and not restricted to a particular geography. Vedas are truly timeless and not restricted to a particular period.

Vedas belong to an era when there was no Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Jew, or Communist.

Vedas alone can be foundations of a truly universal religion that unite all human beings and destroy divisions on the basis of later-era man-made religions.

The subjects of Vedas are beyond restrictions of time and society. The message is quite generic in nature. They provide knowledge that is equally applicable to all times and geographies and yet be beneficial for humanity.

There is no problem in the world which cannot be solved with Vedic wisdom. The solutions to all future problems are in Vedas.

EQUALITY IN VEDAS

Fact 30

"All castes have right" to study Vedas

Regardless of birth-history, everyone has right to study Vedas, including Shudras. Vedas have been accused of prohibiting Shudras from studying Vedas. This is far from the truth. In Vedas, Shudra does not refer to birth-based caste. It is a term to define an uneducated person.

Thus, someone uneducated will automatically not have access to Vedas. But one can attain education and learn Vedas, and he or she shall no more be a Shudra. And regardless of one's parentage, anyone can study and teach Vedas based on his or her merits.

Vedas refute birth-based discrimination of any kind.

Fact 31

"No discrimination" in Vedas

Vedas are strongly against any discrimination based on caste, gender or birth. Vedas demand all humans to have equal social, political, spiritual, religious and educational rights irrespective of gender, birth, caste, region or religion.

There is no birth based caste system in Vedas.

There is Varna system in Vedas, which is the classification based on profession and has nothing to do with birth.

Fact 32
Only "pure meritocracy" in Vedas

There is a pure meritocracy in Vedas. Vedas recommend merit to be the only factor for differentiation. Vedas ask us to be sensitive to the protectio–n of rights of differently-abled.

IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN IN VEDAS

Fact 33

Women are "more important" than every other living creature

Vedas consider women more important than every other living creature on earth because human is the best creation and women are better among humans. The reason for this is not a bias towards women but based on facts – that women sustain the society and create legends out of ordinary humans. Women are first teachers and women exhibit highest levels of tolerance that is so critical for the survival of civilization.

A society where women are educated becomes strong. A society where women are uneducated becomes barbaric. If all men die suddenly, still society would survive because many women would have children in their wombs. If all women die suddenly, the world will perish.

Thus, a Veda follower can no way even imagine subjugation of women or considering them lower than anything in the world.

Fact 34

Women are "source of goodness" in Vedas

Vedas consider women as a source of goodness on earth. Vedas urge us to see a mother in all women and respect them. Women

is not a non-living thing, or an object of enjoyment or something coming from the rib of some fictional early-man called Adam as they are depicted in many religious cults.

Vedas assert that until we rightly bring women to the level of respect, dignity and leadership, no society can be blissful.

Fact 35
Vedas encourage women to "contribute to the society"

Vedas encourage women to contribute to society through economic activities, military, politics, science, technology, research, education. In fact, Vedas assert that unless women take a serious leadership role in all crucial activities of human civilization, there would be anarchy and misery.

Women in Vedas are free to be doctors, engineers, artists, businesswomen, soldiers, politicians, state-heads, priests, teachers or drivers. There are no divine prohibitions on career paths of women.

WOMEN RIGHTS IN VEDAS

Fact 36

Women have "right to study Vedas"

Vedas emphasize women education more than even men because women are first teachers of next generation.

Vedas clearly proclaim that no one should be denied of knowledge of Ishwar/God. Thus, women have full rights to study Vedas.

Fact 37

Vedas are "against polygamy"

Vedas are against polygamy. One man – one woman, is the way of Vedas. The belief that polygamy is divine right of man is "sick" as per Vedas. It is at best a social evil that must be completely eliminated.

Vedas, perhaps, are the only texts in the world that clearly discourage Polygamy. It is so convinced of monogamy that all mantras relating to marriage are in dual voice. It further has several mantras that discourage polygamy.

Fact 38

"No difference" in marital rights in Vedas

Vedas are against divorcing wife simply by uttering or smsing a word three times. There can be no difference in marital rights of man and woman as per Vedas. Husband cannot beat the wife. No

one can keep concubines or slaves. Property rights are same for both genders. Child marriage is wrong as per Vedas. Widow's remarriage is encouraged in Vedas.

Fact 39
"No strict dress code" for women in Vedas

Women in Vedas need not damage their bodies due to lack of Vitamin D caused by staying indoors and covering themselves totally in curtains.

They are free to choose any sensible, decent dress without jeopardizing their freedom, health and comfort or requiring approval from some religious agent.

Fact 40
"Death sentence" for rapist in Vedas

Vedas do not defend or justify rape – the gross insult of womanhood. Punishment for rape is a death sentence as per Vedas, irrespective of the age of culprit.

TOLERANCE IN VEDAS

Fact 41

"No judgment day or eternal hell" in Vedas

Vedas do not ask us to believe in Heaven, Hell, Adam, Eve, Angels, Judgment Day, Prophets, Ghosts or Satan.

Heaven and Hell lie in this world itself. When we benefit from good deeds, it is Heaven. When we face troubles due to bad deeds, it is Hell. They do not refer to any villages in a world atlas.

Adam and Eve refer to man and woman in general. All men and women should be monogamous and devoted to one spouse only.

Angels refer to noble people who work for society. All scientists, social workers, selfless freedom fighters, teachers, parents are angels. There are no angels who fly around in the sky.

Judgment Day refers to every moment in life when we must decide between doing good deeds and bad deeds. This alone shapes our destiny in next moment. Judgment Day does not refer to any fictitious event in the calendar of God when people will rise from graves and line up in a queue to be allotted some Heaven or Hell. God does not need to do such shows and employ some prophets as lawyers.

Prophet refers to our own soul. When we resolve to do good things alone, we make it certain that we would have success in life. Thus, we can make the prophecy of our bright future and hence

we become Prophets. There is a Prophet in each of us. And there is no Prophet outside us.

Ghosts refer to bitter memories of the past that deter us from paying attention to duties of the present. They should be thrashed away, and we should only look ahead.

Satan is the villain in each of us. Let us kill the urge to conduct vices and hence win over Satan. Satan lies inside us; it does not come from outside.

Fact 42
No concept of "disbelievers" in Vedas

Vedas have no concept of disbelievers. Vedas urge us not to believe in some person, book or concept just because a lot many people follow them. Instead, Vedas extol us to stand like a brave warrior for whatever seems true to our own heart to best of our egoless intentions.

Fact 43
Vedas "encourage Apostasy"

Unlike later era cults where punishment for apostasy (rejecting prevailing faith privately or publicly) is death, Vedic culture hails those who question prevailing religious or social practices as Gods, Bhagwans, Avatars or Saints. Thus, Gautam Buddha, Guru Nanak, Sant Kabir, Swami Dayanand Saraswati – all are considered as icons of Dharma or spiritualism.

The basic premise is simple and rational – unless society encourages people to think freely, out of the box, originally and question present conditions, how can there be improvements, progress, and innovations? That is why we see that the societies where

apostasy is punished are among the most uncivilized terror-prone hells on earth. Entire Europe was in lawless darkness till Pope held dominance. We clearly know the situation in Africa, Middle East and even our next door neighbors of the Western border.

Fact 44
Vedas – "the most tolerant" text

Vedas ask us to be tolerant of others just as we tolerate our own weaknesses. So even if we differ from others in views, Vedas urge us to strive for unity and brotherhood. Vedas say that in the world there would always be a variety of languages, customs, social norms, ideologies, and cultures. But we should seek unity despite that on the basis of the divinity that powers all living beings.

Many cults claim to have a monopoly over truth and have punishments for those who refuse to believe in these claims of truth. As per Vedas, these are ways of insane. Because no law will force you to follow the law. E=mc^2 is the law of relativity. But Einstein's research does not say that if you don't believe in this formula, you will be killed. Law will simply hold true irrespective of whether one believes or not. So instead of issuing a fatwa on E=mc^2, sensible scientists would try to teach relativity to deserving students so that they understand themselves and even question or improve upon the law with a better version. And if there is a genius, he can even reject the law in favor of something more complete. This is the way of Vedas.

Fact 45
"No death sentence" for insulting Vedas

Vedas are the only religious texts I am aware of that have no punishment for blasphemy. All that Vedas demand is a sincerity to

discover and embrace whatever one realizes as truth to best of his or her understanding.

So even if you reject Vedas as bogus, Vedas encourage that, so far your intentions are honest. There is no punishment, no death sentence, no divine wrath and no threat for rejecting Vedas fully or partially unlike many religious cults.

There is no death sentence for insulting Vedas or any Vedic role model. Idol worshippers are not worst of creatures as believed by certain cults that harbor terrorism.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN VEDAS

Fact 46

"Religious identity does not" matter in Vedas

All religions have complete freedom to propagate their faiths without threats as per Vedas. Vedas say Hindu, Muslim, or Christian is secondary. First, simply be Human.

Fact 47

"Anyone" can be Vedic

One cannot be a Christian if he refuses to believe in Jesus. One cannot be a Muslim if he refuses to believe in Prophet. In fact, irrespective of his good deeds, he would be forever punished by God for his refusal to believe. Forget God, even in this world, he may be beheaded for blasphemy. If he escapes official punishment because of secular laws in that country, still he may be killed by some fanatic. And then that fanatic would be hailed as 'great' for killing an 'enemy' of religion.

The only option for a rational, spiritual person is Vedas – no threats, no punishments, no mandatory beliefs checklist. As long as one follows the truth and reject the falsehood with best of his intention, he can be Hindu, Muslim or Christian, and still be Vedic.

Fact 48

"No conversion agenda" in Vedas

The Pope says that he aspires all people in the world to become

Christians. All Christian missionaries indulge in social activities with this open agenda. Zakir Naik says that a Muslim cannot get into Heaven until he has converted other people in Islam.

These agents of these medieval religions want to divide the world into believers and non-believers and want to reduce the population of non-believers – through deceit, war, terror or bribe. They demand hatred against non-believers. Look at all the top terrorists of the world. All have a very clear agenda of destroying non-believers.

Pope says that when one becomes Christian, he must agree that Jesus is the only begotten son of God and performs all miracles including salvation. Zakir Naik says that when one becomes Muslim, he must agree that there is no other God but Allah, and Muhammad is his last and only reliable prophet.

But Vedas simply have one agenda for all humans – "Be Humans" (Manurbhava). So technically there is no compulsory specific verse to agree to when one resolves to follow Vedas. You just need to resolve, to be honest and humane.

SPIRIT OF NATIONALISM IN VEDAS

Fact 49

Vedas and "Loyalty towards motherland"

Vedas clearly state that the first religion is "Loyalty towards Motherland." Everything else – being Hindu, Muslim or Christian – comes next.

Some religious cults teach to turn traitors when an enemy nation attacks motherland just because enemy follows my religion. Communists in India were supporting China during 1962 war simply because Karl Marx is dearer to them than Mother India. Vedas have no place for this treachery.

In fact, the concept of Motherland or Matribhoomi or Bharat Mata or Maa Tujhe Salaam or Vande Mataram has its origin in Bhoomi Sukta of Atharvaveda.

Bhoomi Sukta forms the origin of the sense of love that patriots demonstrate for Dharti Mata.

Fact 50

Vedas are against the "haters of country and Humanity"

Vedas ask us to destroy those fanatics who nurture hatred against those who do not follow their faiths.

Anyone who believes that non-believers must be discriminated

in any manner is a potential enemy of humanity. Such elements must be purged out of society so that pluralism is protected.

Vedas ask us to destroy those traitors who conspire against their own nation.

IMPORTANCE OF VEDAS

Fact 51

Vedas are "operating manual" to live in this world

God has provided us all a capability to analyze and reach truth=-bliss. However, the same is blurred by ignorance. Thus, typically, it is impossible for humans to learn everything without being taught. We all are trained since birth for a significant period of time, and only then are we able to use our analytical faculties to learn more. And even then, most of the learning we do is through training. Analytical ability only acts as a tool to make it more efficient.

Similarly, it would have been impossible for humans to make so much of progress without any training support. Even a simple faculty like language, which forms the foundation of human civilization, is impossible to learn without training.

Thus, Vedas were provided as an operating manual to live in this world. Vedas contain the seed knowledge for all fields and sufficient material to start the process of civilization. Without this, human civilization would have been impossible.

Fact 52

Vedic Mantras – Great "healing power"

Recitation of Vedic mantras can bring psychological and physiological healing. Vedic mantras are extremely powerful rejuvenation pills. Each mantra of Vedas can have several meanings – spiritual, social, physical, etc.

Fact 53
Vedas – the source of "eternal bliss"

The goal of life is to seek happiness. That is evident in each act of every living being around. But the happiness in this material world is not permanent. It is short lived. Like life and death, there is a continuous cycle of happiness and misery. The goal of human life is to break free this cycle of happiness and misery and live in the state of eternal bliss.

Now a good person can achieve a higher level of bliss in this world as per his Karma/Actions/Thoughts. But there would be a ceiling due to limited knowledge because higher bliss demands further knowledge.

While seeds for all kinds of knowledge are there within us, we require more specialized training for that knowledge that has more serious implications and lead us to eternal bliss. And for this, there is no better training manual than Vedas.

CONCLUSION

Vedas demand us to love all, not discriminate, be tolerant of differences with others, fight against those who promote hatred on the basis of theological beliefs and work for the unity of all peace loving people irrespective of religion.

Nothing except Vedas are so timeless, region-less, religion-less and yet purpose oriented.

The essence is that the only foundation for a universal religion for modern human civilization lies in Vedas – the original source. It is the only recipe we have to unite the world. Vedas alone form foundations of a universal humane rational philosophy of life.

Let's bring Vedas to every doorstep. Let's bring Vedas to every human.

THERE IS NO OTHER WAY

ABOUT AUTHOR

Once a teacher asked children, "If God comes in front of you right now, what would they do?" Someone said, "He would bow." Another said, "He would worship." Some said, "They would ask for wealth." All students had their wish lists to fulfill. Suddenly, the teacher asked a boy named 'Sanjeev,' "What would he do with God?" The boy replied, "I would rush to God's lap and would never come down." All of a sudden, a pin drop silence pervaded the classroom. The teacher was shocked! Those innocent but straight words of a little boy shook her entirely. Was this the innocence of a ten-year-old boy or resolve of a soul to attain salvation?

This boy was born on 17th July in Kolkata. Parents gave him the name "Sanjeev." The world does not know much about his past, but who interacted with him remembers one thing that he is a staunch Hanuman Bhakt, who could not stand vulgarity even for a second. His belief that every woman is to be respected as Mother had started carving a different persona out of that otherwise ordinary looking child. The boy was right on track of spirituality on which the likes of Ram, Krishna, Shankaracharya, Dayanand, and Vivekanand stepped once! Moreover, then came the Ram Mandir Movement, and the Hanuman Bhakt got actively involved in awakening people about the same. Spirituality had started making a blend with nationalism in the boy's brain.

Though, at home, parents were not happy with the boy's social work and started losing hope for his bright career. However, the Divine had different plans. Boy cracked one of the toughest entrance exams in the world- IIT JEE and went to the most prestigious IIT Guwahati. By this time, he had mastered most of the religious texts like Geeta, Ramayan, Mahabharat, Upanishads, Pu-

ranas, and Ayurved. Then it was the time to study the holy Vedas. He went to many scholars and Yogis to discuss concepts of Vedas, and in no time, he completed Vedic Studies. By the time he graduated from IIM Calcutta (top management institution of India), he could break up Vedic Mantras into constituent words and the words into their roots, to explain the essence of individual Mantra!

He was recruited by prominent organizations in health, finance, and education worldwide. He had served in 8 countries before he quit from a professional career and launched Agniveer to revive the Vedic era in 2009. In his own words: "In the view of the deteriorating situation of the nation, misdirection of youth, and threats to humanity, I was inspired by divine to start Agniveer – the only way to salvation". Within two years, Agniveer became the number one spiritual website of the world. Whether it is equality in society or women rights, Vedas or spirituality, self-help or nationalism, world peace or universal humanism, Agniveer became a pioneer in all.

He has dispelled the myths like beef, alcohol, violence, history, and scientific errors in Vedas single handed. He challenged fanatics to bring even a single Mantra from Vedas that support any of the above! The challenge is yet to be taken up after it was thrown three years back!

People ask many times, what is his brain made up of? He starts explaining Vedic Mantra to students of Vedas and the next moment he is found discussing Robotics with Scientists. He discusses Particle Physics and Geeta side by side. He delivers lectures on the immortality of the soul as well as on computational models for forecasting performances of firms! He teaches advanced probability to IIT Scientists and Yogdarshan to Acharyas! He can be an object of jealousy to many bodybuilders for his physique. Those

who have seen his face can tell what is that glow that always resides on his face. "A man with a great physique, the greater brain, and the greatest soul," is all he can be concluded in one sentence! It seems the little boy has found the God! He is now on the mission to help others do same...

Dr. Vashi Sharma
IIT Bombay, India

ABOUT AGNIVEER

Agniveer was founded by Shri Sanjeev Newar, an IIT-IIM professional, data scientist, and Yogi to provide a solution-oriented, spiritually driven, and honest approach to improving the world - within and outside an individual. Agniveer specializes in practical applications of timeless wisdom of Vedas, Geeta, and Yoga to address the contemporary challenges of life. Thousands of testimonials of transformation - from people who were on verge of committing suicide, fighting depression, confused about life, directionless, unable to address social injustice around - attest the massive change it has been able to bring.

Agniveer takes credit in bringing several ignored, uncomfortable but critical issues to public attention. Agniveer is the leading advocate of social equality in India and pioneer of 'Dalit Yajna' initiative to break caste and gender barriers. Agniveer spearheaded the Muslim women rights campaign facing severe backlash from conservative and fanatic elements. Yet, it was successful in bringing details of disgusting practices like Halala, sex-slavery, polygamy, triple talaq and love jihad to limelight and evolving a consensus against them. Agniveer women helpline deals with such cases and has brought many smiles.

Agniveer also introduced the concept of unarmed combat workshops across sensitive parts of country to create a skilled team that is able to defend vulnerable from criminals. Agniveer is a prominent champion of de-radicalization and has brought innumerable youth to join the mainstream path. Agniveer's narrative on history has created a significant momentum to question the authenticity of populist history taught out of political compulsions.

Agniveer has published several books on social equality, caste equality, gender equality, human rights, the controversial religious rights and history, apart from books on self-help, Yoga, Hinduism, and life-hacks. Readers appreciate the books for straightforward, original, solution-oriented, practical, fresh, and mind-bending experience.

Everyone keen to live a meaningful life to fullest is welcome to join or support Agniveer mission.

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